



Offering Improved Service with Live Online Help Functions

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You know the problem. You have found the site you needed, and you think you have found the product, but you have a couple of questions. It is likely that your site visitors (potential clients/customers) have had the same experience on your site. Luckily, there are some great add on services that can add live help to your site at a very affordable price (even free!). Improving your online customer service with live help can be the difference between closing the deal and losing the customer to a site that can answer those questions. While there are many options out there, I feature two here that I have used successfully. Both have excellent reputations, are easy to integrate into your existing site and simple to use.

Option #1: LivePerson – www.liveperson.com

Advantages:

1. Proven product: LivePerson has been offering online live help solutions since 1995, a long time in Internet terms. They are a publicly traded company with strong financials so you will not risk data loss from an unproven vendor.
2. Customizable: They have excellent customer service and a fully customizable product; you can create custom graphics so that the chat window and all related images tie seamlessly into your site design and branding.
3. Requires no user-end software in order for it to work.

Disadvantages: There are no real disadvantages to this product. However, the monthly price of this service may be a barrier to some small businesses, particularly relative to the free option below.

Price: \$99 per month for LivePerson Pro

Option #2: AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) – www.aim.com

Advantages: The price (free) couldn't be better. In addition, the installation and ease of use of this service can't be beat.

Disadvantages:

1. Lack of customization: you have no control over the appearance of the chat window or any other function. You are required to use it as it offered. Therefore, there is no way to tie the function into your site design or branding.
2. Requirement of AIM software on user's computer: if a user does not have this program installed on their computer, they will not be able to use it.

Price: FREE

Please note that online help is only good if you have a person in the office and at a computer with an Internet connection most of the day.

If you have any questions about integrating either of these services into your site, just email me at alli@denningsolutions.com – **OR**, you can use the live help link from my home page!

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